



## Local History: Street Numbering

In December 1886, JB Monk, a local butcher, wrote to the Local Board/Urban District Council asking that the houses in the town be numbered. The Board thought that it would be too expensive, unless everyone wanted it.

Four years later, the Council minutes record that samples of street plates and house numbers had been received from Messrs Woolley & Co. of Accrington. It was decided that the question of numbering the houses in the town should be referred to the Highways & General Purposes Committee. Nothing seems to have happened.

Eleven years after Mr Monk's request, the Council received a letter from 76 firms and tradesmen in the town asking them to '*cause the houses or buildings to be marked with numbers*'. The Highways and General Purposes Committee were instructed to report on the matter.

In December 1900, a letter came from the Registrar General '*as to the naming of streets and numbering of houses and recommended the Council to have the names of the streets renewed and new names painted up where necessary and the houses numbered by and at the expense of the Council.*' The Surveyor submitted '*a list of streets and houses requiring to be named and numbered*'.

A month later, the Surveyor was asked to get tenders for name plates for the streets and the supply and fixing of the numbers of the houses in the town. These were received from Messrs Gargett & Co. and Messrs Cox & Co. At a Council meeting on 22 March 1901, it was reported that the street name plates and house numbering was being carried out and that there was to be a distinct number for each house and place of business. There are still some of the original blue street signs left in the town and several houses have the small oval number plates they were given over 100 years ago.

The 1905 Warren's Alton Directory lists the Post Office between 15 and 16 High Street. It seems to be the only High Street building without a street number - was this because the Post Office would not need to deliver letters to itself?